

WINTHROP UNIVERSITY

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SCHOOL

NEWS UPDATE

Issue No. 3

February/March 2002

A collaborative partnership between the Richard W. Riley College of Education, Winthrop Olde English Consortium Board of Governors, Cotton Belt Elementary School, Crowders Creek Complex, Lancaster High School, Lewisville Elementary School, and Sullivan Middle School.

THE VISION AND MISSION

The PDSs began in 1993 to link the university's teacher education resources with the Winthrop Olde English Consortium's six area school districts. The aim of the PDS is to strengthen teacher education and development by serving as exemplary sites of instruction, builders of knowledge and vehicles for mentoring novice and experience teachers.

The mission of each PDS is dedicated to meet four purposes:

1. Provide exemplary education.
2. Renew and improve professional preparation programs.
3. Establish continuing professional development opportunities for both public school and Winthrop University educators.
4. Conduct an organized program of school-based research designed to improve practice.

Each PDS directs its resources to connect theory and practice in such a way as to meet the educational needs of South Carolina's children.

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CROWDERS CREEK EXPLORING THE GREAT OUTDOORS Submitted by Patricia King (Crowders Creek Complex educator)

Four student interns were welcomed into the Crowders Creek school family on January 12th with a coffee hosted by the administrators. Afterwards, the students were given a grand tour of the elementary and middle school complex! Students were sent away with a scavenger hunt assignment to interview many important people in the school such as the secretary, bookkeeper, cafeteria manager, custodian, speech teacher, guidance counselor, etc. To enhance the learning experience of the interns, mini-staff development activities have been planned throughout the semester. These include, but are not limited to, student assessment (PACT), counseling services, special education referral procedures, curriculum matters, discipline, parent-teacher conferences and technology. Students will soon pile into a van and take a guided tour of the entire Clover School District. A significant tour highlight will include a visit to the district office; interns will be introduced to central staff personnel, including the superintendent and personnel director.

Dorothy A. Metzler, from the Anne Close Springs Greenway and Winthrop University, is working with the faculty in developing activities for the school's outdoor science classroom. Each grade level has selected a unit to be implemented "Down By The Creek" in the outdoor classroom. Proposed pilot

grade level curriculum units include:

- Kindergarten - Seasonal Change and Trees
- First Grade - Plants
- Second Grade - Insects
- Third Grade - Habitats
- Fourth Grade - Weather
- Fifth Grade - Aquatic Environments
- Sixth Grade - Single-celled organisms

Science standards, of course, have been incorporated into each unit, and fun hands-on activities have been planned. A scavenger hunt has been designed to allow students to explore this wonderful outdoor setting. Students will be looking for animal dens, bird nests, briars, dead trees, decomposing leaves, eaten pine cones, fish, ferns, lichen, moss, reindeer moss, sapsucker holes, spider webs, squirrel nests, sweet gum balls, turtles, and woodpecker holes!

In February, Dr. Ron Miles will begin teaching a graduate course at Crowders Creek to PDS teachers from Crowders Creek Complex (Clover), Lewisville Elementary School (Chester), and Cotton Belt Elementary School (York). The course, which is partially funded by the Teacher Quality grant, will give teachers more strategies for working with at-risk students. Everyone is

excited about this wonderful opportunity for professional growth!

A Photo Gallery of the Crowders Creek Outdoor Science Center Inquiry Project is displayed on the Winthrop University Riley College of Education PDS bulletin board.

PEER TUTORING
Submitted by Matt Brown
(Cotton Belt Elementary School educator)

Cotton Belt Elementary School welcomed four new interns to our campus in January with a breakfast reception. Faculty from Cotton Belt and Winthrop, as well as York School District #1 officials, attended the reception. The interns then toured the Cotton Belt campus with Matt Brown, principal. They will also tour the school's attendance area with Mr. Brown in the near future. Some of the interns will be piloting a new inquiry project this semester. They will work with their mentor teachers to investigate questions relating to instruction, classroom management, or other pertinent topics.

Another new PDS project at Cotton Belt is the peer-tutoring model which CBES educators will be using this spring. Dr. Susan Green and Dr. Gary Alderman, Winthrop University professors, will be helping to train fourth and fifth graders to tutor second graders who are having difficulties in reading. The peer tutors will work with the second graders who are having difficulties in reading. The peer tutors will work with the second graders twice a week. They will listen to the younger children read and document any reading errors. Dr. Green and Dr. Alderman will be on campus both days to analyze the results of the tutoring sessions and to prepare materials for the next lessons. Once a week the reading specialist at Cotton Belt, Paulette Moore, will gather the second graders being tutored for a small group literacy lesson based on the results of the tutoring sessions.

TEACHER MENTOR PROGRAM

Submitted by
Kristie Taylor
(Lancaster High School educator)

In an effort to retain first year teachers and to give the most positive first year experience, Lancaster High started a Teacher Mentor program this year. Designed to give new teachers the opportunity to both observe and be observed, the program hopes to create an atmosphere of collegial communication about best practices.

"This is not an evaluative kind of program where the new teachers have to feel pressured," said program coordinator Rosalyn Mood. "This just gives our new folks a chance to see and be seen, and then reflect on what they are doing in the classroom."

The program is two-fold. First, new teachers are assigned mentors within their own department. The mentor makes himself/herself available to the new teacher to answer questions, provide insight and share lesson plans. The mentor should also observe the new teacher on occasion and offer positive feedback about teaching practices and methodologies. The new teacher can also sit in on the mentor's class to see a first-hand example of how an experienced teacher handles classroom management or a particular lesson.

The second phase of the program calls for a more formal observation time between the new teachers and Mood. Although the observation process is three-fold - pre-conference, observation, and post-conference - the first year teacher doesn't have to fear a harsh evaluation. Mood simply leads them in questioning their own practices.

This is the first year of the program, one that Mood was familiar with from the time she spent teaching in Virginia. The program there was more structured and created time for beginners and mentors to meet. Time has been the biggest

problem for the program at Lancaster High. "With everyone's schedules being so different, the hardest part is finding the time to leave your classroom to observe or be observed," Mood said. "We are going to work harder this semester to make sure that every new teacher has the opportunity to get out and see what else is going on in other classrooms."

2002 PDS NATIONAL CONFERENCE

Breaking Ground, Building a Foundation, and Keeping House: PDS As A Cornerstone for School Renewal
MARCH 7-10, 2002
ORLANDO, FLORIDA

The concept of school/university partnerships is rapidly becoming the focus of groups all across the nation. The literature on partnerships and professional development schools is starting to flood the journals. Many such school/university partnerships have been operating for ten or more years.

The focus of the conference is quite broad and promises to meet the needs of those thinking of beginning partnerships as well as those who have been operating for a long time. Presentations will focus on the three fold themes of beginning partnerships, strengthening partnerships, and maintaining partnerships.



**A Focus on Becoming "Real"
Teachers**

Submitted by

**Dr. Barbara Blackburn (Winthrop
University Broker) and Dr. Robert
Heath (Sullivan Middle School
educator)**

One of the tenets of being a true middle school is that we engage in preparing teachers specifically to be successful in teaching the middle level child. Prior to our participation as a PDS, Sullivan Middle School, like most middle schools, worked with student interns as much as possible, and utilized staff development hours working with current faculty on the various aspects of the middle school concept and characteristics of the middle level child. We did this with some degree of success, but rarely as an ongoing, focused effort for our student interns or faculty.

We have come to believe that part of our mission as professional educators is to play a part in the preparation of the teachers of the future. As a new PDS, Sullivan has borrowed pages out of other, more experienced PDSs, to develop a comprehensive program which will both enhance our development of student interns, but will also enhance the continuing growth of our current faculty. Other PDSs, such as Cotton Belt Elementary, have been most generous in sharing their

experiences and information with us, and we have put many borrowed ideas to work.

Sullivan Middle School's focus this semester is on enhancing the intern experience for our eleven full-time interns. As Dr. Bob Heath, principal, noted, "I want you (interns) not to just FEEL like you are a part of Sullivan, I want you to BE a part of Sullivan." Throughout the semester, interns will attend a series of seminars related to middle level education and their future teaching careers. For the seminars, we will use an extensive resource of knowledge and experience in our teachers, administrators, and our PDS Broker, Dr. Barbara Blackburn, as speakers and facilitators.

The seminar topics are:

1. Introductory Meeting and Bus Tour
2. The Middle School Concept and Teacher Teams
3. Discipline and Classroom Management
4. Parent Communication and Parent/Teacher Conferencing
5. High Stakes Testing and Classroom Instruction
6. Mock Interviews
7. Learning from Veteran Teachers
8. Administrivia: Organizing to Survive
9. ESL and Special Education in the Regular Classroom
10. Learning from 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Year Teachers

The introductory seminar, "Getting to Know Sullivan" included a bus tour of the area. Students were also given Sullivan T-shirts and Sullivan name badges with the title "Teacher Intern." The intent of the name badges is to help integrate the interns into the faculty as quickly as possible. They were given copies of the Teacher Handbook, Strategic Plan, Student Handbook and Sullivan Calendar. We served breakfast and covered a rather long list of "Nuts and Bolts" such as professional dress, meeting attendance, handling money, and so forth.

The bus tour, which we hoped would be the highlight of the morning wound up being a much longer trip than anticipated. Of course, we'll spend some time working on the tour before our next group of interns joins us.

An interesting offshoot of organizing the bus tour is that many of our current faculty learned of it, and have asked that they have such a tour before the start of next school year – and we will! Also, as we have worked through the topics for the seminars, we are finding areas where we have been weak in our orientation for our new full-time teachers. We will use this information to formalize our induction of all first year teachers, and much of it will be used to orient veteran teachers who are new to our school.

Overall, we feel we have gotten our teacher interns off to a great start, and have



*Principal Bob
Heath shares
Nuts and
Bolts
information
with Teachers*

established an excellent starting place for our own development as a PDS. We will look forward to our seminars, and expect that they will provide our interns helpful information.



Sullivan Middle School Teacher Interns head out on their bus tour of the Sullivan attendance community

UPCOMING PDS EVENTS

- February 21 Winthrop University
PDS Diversity Retreat
Keynote Speaker -
Mr. Mychal Wynn
- March 1 Lewisville Cub Club to visit
Winthrop University
- March 7-10 PDS National Conference
Orlando, Florida
- May 29 Winthrop University
PDS Assessment and
Teamwork Retreat

**WINTHROP UNIVERSITY
PDS DIVERSITY CONFERENCE
KEYNOTE SPEAKER ADDRESSES
INCREASING STUDENT
ACHIEVEMENT**

February 21, 2002
4:00 pm - 8:00 p.m.

A honors cum laude graduate of Boston's Northeastern University, Mychal Wynn has written such innovative and groundbreaking books and curriculum as Empowering African American Males to Succeed: A Ten-Step Approach for Parents and Teachers; Building Dreams: Helping Students Discover Their Potential Elementary



Education Teacher's Guide and Teacher, Parent, Mentor Workbook; The Eagles who Thought They were Chickens (a model for fostering a positive classroom climate and overall school culture); Ten Steps to Helping Your Child Succeed in School; Don't Quit; Enough is Enough ; and Follow Your Dreams: Lessons I Learned In School. The author of eleven books and over 40 publications, he is a nationally recognized expert in the process of school improvement. Working with school districts and organizations throughout the United States, Wynn trains over one hundred thousand parents, teachers, and administrators annually on each of the major components of school improvement.

**Increasing Student Achievement:
Developing Schools of Excellence
Learning goals will include:**

How to pull together a team of stakeholders to develop a holistic, systemic, and synergistic vision that will guide the school community through the transformation continuum.

How to develop a statement of beliefs and core values that align each school community with the state-wide, county-wide, or district-wide assessment criteria and learning outcomes.

How to develop effective stakeholder teams that tap each school community's creative capacity for problem-solving the academic, social, attendance, tardy, discipline, parent involvement, and business partnership issues. How to develop an holistic assessment strategy that gathers, interprets, analyzes, and utilizes data that is meaningful and relevant to the pursuit of the school's vision.

How to establish assessment criteria, develop goals, and effective teacher teams to facilitate the strategic planning required to achieve the vision.

How to inspire students to approach the learning process with passion and purpose and inspire parents to support your efforts.

How to develop strategies, intervention programs, and instructional methodologies consistent with the diversity and unique needs of the student population within your school community.

**CONGRATULATIONS
CROWDERS CREEK
COMPLEX WAS
RECENTLY
AWARDED AND
HONORED AS
SOUTH CAROLINA'S
RECYCLING SCHOOL
OF THE YEAR**